

companion. I have, however, been disappointed. Recalling to mind a former and very similar case, in which the decomposing body of the snake swallowed caused the death of its destroyer, I had much doubt about the digestive powers of this animal. But in the present instance the snake has not only digested its companion, but has regained its appetite as well as its normal size. On Friday, Nov. 2nd, the keeper, finding the creature moving about as if in search of food, placed a pigeon in its den, which was seized and swallowed immediately.

I have had this voracious serpent measured, and find it to be 11 feet in length. The one which it swallowed was about 9 feet in length. It will be seen by this that a serpent of 11 feet in length can not only swallow and digest another serpent only about two feet shorter, but is ready to feed again twenty-eight days afterwards.

4. On a new Agonoid Fish (*Agonus gilberti*) from Kamtschatka. By R. COLLETT.

[Received October 29, 1894.]

(Plate XLV.)

I propose to call this new Fish

AGONUS GILBERTI, sp. nov. (Plate XLV.)

DIAGN.—*Body very elongate and compressed, the tail everywhere higher than broad. Head $3\frac{3}{4}$ –4 times in total length (caudal included); height of body 8 times. Snout very long, 3 times longer than the interorbital space. Barbels on lower side of snout and on the jaws. Teeth in villiform bands on the jaws; none on vomer or palatines. Spines on head and plates on body much as in *A. acipenserinus*, the spines very high and pointed; plates on breast about 10. First dorsal begins at the end of 4th scale; 3 scales between the dorsals. Ventrals received in a longitudinal groove. Greyish brown with darker spots; head with shortish bands.*

1 D. 8. 2 D. 8–9. A. 10–11. P. 15–17. Lin. lat. 38.

Habitat. Kamtschatka (type specimens in the Christiania Museum).

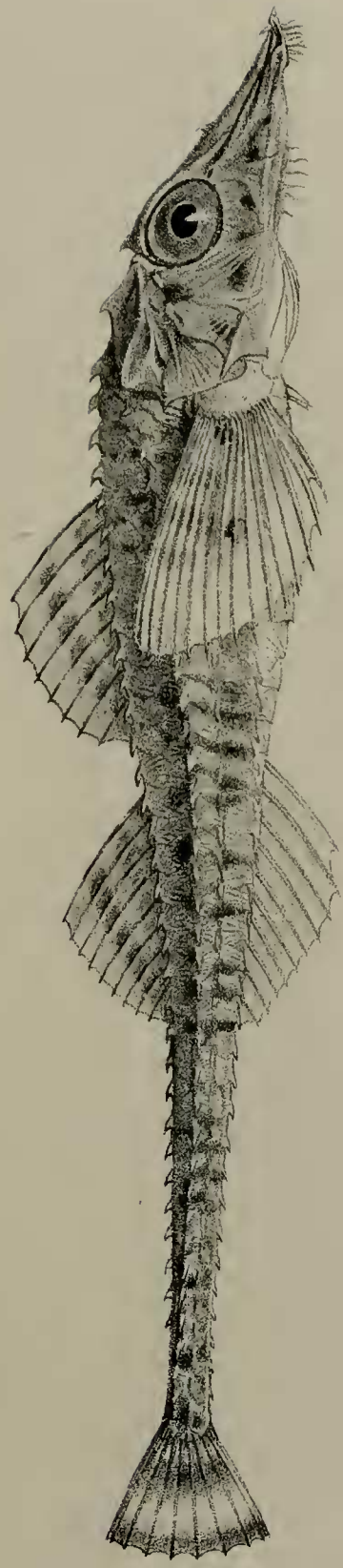
DESCRIPTION.—*The body is very elongated and compressed, rather high in front, and tapering to the tail. Its height (from ventrals to first dorsal scale) equals the length of the snout, and is contained in the total length about 8 times.*

The tail is compressed, long and slender; its height everywhere greater than its breadth.

The head.—Its length is contained in full-grown specimens 4 times, in younger ones about $3\frac{3}{4}$ times in the total length (caudal included).



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Thus in four specimens of different sizes the proportions are the following :—

Total length 183 millim. . . .	Head-length	3·66 times.
Total length 254 millim. . . .	„	3·73 „
Total length 277 millim. . . .	„	4·01 „
Total length 290 millim. . . .	„	4·02 „

Snout very long, 3 times longer (or more) than the interorbital space (between the bases of the supraocular spines).

Posterior part of the head comparatively smooth, the interorbital space rather concave; no quadrangular pit on the occiput in front of the dorsal scales.

Eye comparatively large; the horizontal diameter a little larger than the vertical. It is contained a little more than 2 times in the length of the snout, and rather more than 4 times in the length of head.

Cirri on lower side of snout (in front of the premaxillary) and at the angles of the jaws¹. Their length equals that of the eye.

Mouth entirely inferior; distance from premaxillaries to tip of rostral spines about equal to the length of the eye.

Teeth in the jaws; vomerine or palatine teeth none.

Armature of the head.—Much like that of *A. acipenserinus*. The rostral spines 4, two projecting horizontally forwards, two (behind the first) curved backwards. A third pair on the snout (much nearer the eye than the rostral spines).

Orbital ridge with a single spine (supraocular, no preocular); the lower ridge finely serrated.

Occipital ridges, operculum, and preoperculum as in *A. acipenserinus*, but the spines more pointed and longer.

Suborbital with a double ridge at its lower margin, the upper ridge with two distinct spines behind, and a third (sometimes indistinct) at equal distance from the eye and the tip of the snout.

Head with about 18 distinct spines altogether.

Armature of body.—Plates on the back and sides of the same number as in *A. acipenserinus*, but the spines are longer and curved more backwards, and strong everywhere from head to caudal. Between the two dorsal keels and between the two lateral keels there are no traces of another keel (as in *A. valsus*).

Breast with about 10 polygonal plates, 4 of which form a series on each side and 2 a median series; bases of pectorals and ventrals also surrounded with plates. All the plates have a short spine in their centre.

Dorsal plates numbering :—

		Plates.
From occiput to first dorsal	(Pair)	4
First dorsal extending over	„	8
Between the dorsals	„	3
Second dorsal extending over	„	9+1
From second dorsal to caudal	(Single)	15

¹ All the specimens are in a bad state of preservation and most of the barbels are lost.

The dorsal keel (coalescing with the keel on the other side at the 15th plate in front of the caudal fin) is consequently composed of 38 to 39 plates; the lower lateral keel, extending from lower base of the caudal to base of the 10th pectoral ray, contains 35 plates.

Abdominal plates numbering:—

		Plates.
From ventrals to anal	(Pair)	11
The anal extending over	„	10
From anal to caudal	(Single)	17

The abdominal keel (coalescing at the 17th plate in front of the caudal) is formed by a series of 38 plates.

Lateral line distinct; 38 pores.

Fins.—In the 10 specimens, at present preserved in the museum at Christiania, the fin-rays are the following:—

1 D. 8	2 D. 8	A. 10	P. 17-17
8	9	10	? 16
8	9	10	16-16
8	8	10	15-16
8	8	10	17-17
8	8	10	17-17
8	8	10	16-17
8 (+1)	8	11	16-17
8	8	10	15-16
8	9	10	17-17

First dorsal begins behind the fourth dorsal plate and has 8 rays (one specimen has an additional slender ray in the space between the two dorsals). Its height equals its distance from the head. It extends over 8 scales; the first two rays in the space between the fourth and fifth plate.

The dorsal fins are separated by 3, sometimes by 4 plates.

Second dorsal has 8, sometimes 9, rays, and extends over 8 plates; behind the last ray is one pair of plates, before the unpaired series begins.

Anal has commonly 10 rays (in one specimen 11); its height equals that of the 2nd dorsal, and is rather less than that of the 1st dorsal. It commences between the 11th and 12th pairs of scales in the abdominal series.

Ventrals short in the female, shorter than the vertical diameter of the eye; longer in the male, equalling the length of the snout. Each has one short spine and three articulated rays, two of which are divided to their base. They are received in a longitudinal common groove (“*Podothecus*”).

Pectoral has 16-17, rarely 15 rays, some of which are sometimes branched in their upper half, but not always. The first ray is short, about equal to half the second ray; the lowermost rays a little thicker than the rest. Its form is a little emarginate, the 5th lower ray being a trifle longer than the 6th and 7th. The tip extends to a distance from the anal of 2 or 3 plates.

COLOUR.—Greyish brown, with dark spots and shortish bands : belly whitish.

On the upper part of head the spots form longitudinal bands—one of these (single) running down in the median line of front, between the eyes. A second (and more distinct) band extends on each side of the snout from the tip to the anterior margin of the eye, hence running under the orbital rim; in some specimens it is continued as a narrow ring round the eye, but commonly this is broken and indistinct.

On the opercles and sides of the snout the spots are roundish and well marked.

On the body also the spots are roundish, rarely oblong, their size equalling that of the pupil. They are darkest and most distinct on the back, being sometimes almost obliterated on the sides.

The colour of the fins is rather indistinct in the badly-preserved specimens before me. The pectorals have a dark oblong spot at their bases (from about 6th to 11th ray); the dorsals have two dark bars, separated by whitish, and with the tip in 1st dorsal also blackish (in 2nd whitish). The caudal has a dark cross-bar a little behind the base, and a dark margin. The anal is apparently whitish to the margin in the female; in the single male specimen at least the outer half is blackish.

Measurements (in millimetres).

Nos. 1 to 9 are females, No. 10 is a male.

No.	Total length. (C. incl.)	Length of head.	Height of body.	Snout to anus.	Snout to dorsal.	Diameter of eye.	Length of snout.
1 ...	183	50	22	48	61	9	26
2 ...	254	63	35	66	84	15	34
3 ...	258	64	31	64	80	14	31
4 ...	263	63	31	60	81	14	32
5 ...	263	65	30	61	80	14	31
6 ...	270	68	33	64	84	15	34
7 ...	274	68	31	69	86	15	34
8 ...	277	69	35	70	86	16	34
9 ...	290	72	32	72	89	16	38
10 ...	258	63	30	65	80	14	31

OVA.—Several of the females were filled with ripe ova; their number in the two ovaries together about 3000. The roe had a diameter of 1·2 millim.